

## O. HENRY'S LAST AND BEST SHORT STORIES

## THE DOOR OF UNREST

A Story of a Man Who Was the Original "Wanderer," Or--?

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## PART I.

SAT an hour by sun, in the editor's room of the Montopoli's Weekly Bugle. I was the editor.

The saffron rays of the declining sunlight filtered through the cornstalks in Micaiah Widdup's garden, and cast an amber glory upon my paste pot.

I sat at the editorial desk in my non-revolving chair, and prepared my editorial against the oligarchies.

The room, with its one window, was already a prey to the twilight. One by one, with my transcendent sentences, I popped off the heads of the political hydra, while I listened, full of kindly ease, to the house-coming cowbells and wondered what Mrs. Flanagan was going to have for supper.

Then in from the dusky, quiet street here drifted and perched himself upon a corner of my desk old Father Time's younger brother.

His face was beardless and as gnarled as an English walnut. I never saw another such as he wore. They would have reduced Joseph's coat to a monochrome.

But the colors were not the dye's stains and patches and the work of sun and rust were responsible for the diversity. On his coarse shoes was the thought, conceivably, of a thousand leagues.

I can describe him no further, except to say that he was little and weird and odd. I began to estimate in centuries when I saw him.

Yes, and I remember that there was an odor, a faint odor like aloes, or possibly like myrrh or leather; and I thought of museums.

And then I reached for a pad and pencil, for business is business, and visits of the oldest inhabitants are sacred and honorable, requiring to be chronicled.

"I am glad to see you, sir," I said. "I would offer you a chair, but—you see, sir," I went on, "I have lived in Montopoli only three weeks, and I have not met many of our citizens."

I turned a doubtful eye upon his dust-stained shoes, and concluded with a newspaper phrase:

"I suppose that you reside in our midst?"

My visitor fumbled in his raiment, drew forth a soiled card and handed it to me. Upon it was written in plain but unattractively formed characters the name "Michob Ader."

"I am glad you called, Mr. Ader," I said. "Am one of our older citizens you

must view with pride the recent growth and enterprise of Montopoli. Among other improvements I think I can promise that the town will now be provided with a live, enterprising newspaper.

"Do you know the name on that card?" asked my caller, interrupting me.

"It is not a familiar one to me," I said.

Again he visited the depths of his ancient vestments. This time he brought out a torn leaf of some book or journal, brown and flimsy with age.

The heading of the page was The Turkish Spy in old-style type; the print, quaint, conceivably, of a thousand years.

"There is a man come to Paris in this year 1641 who pretends to have lived these sixteen hundred years. He says of himself that he was a shoemaker in Jerusalem at the time of the Crucifixion; that his name is Michob Ader, and that when the Messiah was condemned by Pontius Pilate, the Roman president, He paused to rest while bearing His cross to the place of crucifixion before the door of Michob Ader."

"The shoemaker struck Jesus with his fist, saying: 'Go, why tarriest thou?' The Messiah answered him: 'I indeed am going; but thou shalt tarry until I come, thereby condemning him to live until the day of judgment.'"

"He lives forever, but at the end of every hundred years he falls into a fit or trance, on recovering from which he finds himself in the same state of youth in which he was at the time of the Crucifixion, being then about thirty years of age."

"Such is the story of the Wandering Jew, as told by Michob Ader, who relates."

Here the printing ended.

I must have muttered aloud something to myself about the Wandering Jew, for the old man spoke up, bitterly and loudly:

"Ye have my name on the card ye hold; and ye have read the bit of paper they call 'The Turkish Spy' that printed the news when I stepped into their office on the 15th day of June in the year 1641, just as I have called upon ye to-day."

I laid down my pencil and pad. Clearly it would not do. Here was an item for the local column of the Bugle that—but it would not do.

Fragment of the impossible 'personal' began to flit through my conventionalized brain:

"Uncle Michob is as spry on his legs as a young chap of only a thousand or so."

"Our venerable caller relates with pride that George Washington, Ptolemy the Great—once dandied him on his knee at his father's house."

"Uncle Michob says that our war spring was nothing in comparison with the dampness that ruined the crops around Mount Ararat when he was a boy."



There has already been a decided reaction in favor of Judas Iscariot and Col. Blarney and the celebrated violinist, Signor Nero. This is the age of white wash. You must not allow yourself to become downhearted."

Unknowingly, I had struck a chord. The old man blinked, hesitated, and then he said:

"This time," he said, "that the liars be doing justice to somebody. Ver his- torians are no more than a pack of old women snoring at a wake. A finer man than the Emperor Nero never was. Man, I was at the burning of Rome. I knowed the Emperor well, for in them days I was a well known character. In them days they had respect for a man that lived forever."

"But 'twas of the Emperor Nero I was going to tell ye. I struck into Rome, up the Appian Way, on the night of July the 18th, the year sixty-four. I had just stepped down by way of Siberia and Afghanistan; and one foot of me had a frost-bite and the other a blister burned by the sand of the desert; and I was feelin' a bit blue from doin' patrol duty from the North Pole down to the Last Chance corner in Patagonia, and bein' misused in the bargain."

"Well, I'm tellin' ye I was passin' the Circus Maximus, and it was dark as pitch over the way, and then I heard somebody sing out, 'Is that you, Michob?'"

"Over against the wall, hid out among a pile of barrels and old dry-goods boxes, was the Emperor Nero with his legs cranked around his toes, smokin' a long, black cigar."

"Have one, Michob?" says he.

"None of the weeds for me," says I. "I'm a pipe smoker, and I don't use 'em." says I, "of smokin' when ye've not got the ghost of a chance of killin' yourself by doin' it."

"That for ye, Michob Ader, my perpetual Jew," says the Emperor, "ye're not always wanderin'. Sure, 'tis danger gives the spice of our pleasures—next to their bein' forbidden."

"And for what," says I, "do ye smoke be night in dark places without even a claturion in plain clothes to attend ye?"

"Have ye ever heard, Michob," says the Emperor, "of predestination?"

"I've had the count of it," says I. "I've been on the trot with predestination for many a year, and more to come, as ye well know."

"And then I sets down and takes off a shoe and rubs me foot that is frost-bitten, and the Emperor tells me about it. It seems that since I passed that way before, the Emperor had mandamus'd the impressa wid a divorce suit, and Misses Poppas, a calibrated lady, was in-

raged, without references, as housekeeper at the palace.

"'All in one day,' says the Emperor, 'she puts up new lace windy-curtains in the palace and joins the anti-tobacco society, and when I feels the need of a smoke I must be after smokin' put to these piles of lumber in the dark.'"

"So there in the dark me and the Emperor stay, and I told him of me travels. And when they say the Emperor was an incendiary they be, 'Twas that night the fire started that burnt the city. 'Tis my opinion that he began from a stump of cigar that he threw down among the barrels. And 'tis a lie that he fiddled. He did all I could for six days to stop it, sir."

And now I detected a new flavor to Mr. Michob Ader. It had not been mystery or belief or hypocrisy that I had smelted.

The emanation was the odor of hot whiskey—and, worse still, of low comedy—the sort that small humorists manufacture by clothing the grave and reverend things of legend and history in the vulgar, topical frippery that passes for a certain kind of wit.

Michob Ader as an impostor, claiming nineteen hundred years, and playing his part with the decency of respectable lunacy, I could endure; but as a tedious wag, cheapening his egregious story with songbook levity, his importance as an entertainer grew less.

And then, as if he suspected my thoughts, he suddenly shifted his key.

"You'll excuse me, sir," he whined, "but sometimes I get a little mixed in my head. I am a very old man, and it is hard to remember everything."

I knew that he was right, and that I should not try to reconcile him with his own history, so I asked for news concerning other ancestors with whom he had walked familiar.

(To Be Continued.)

## The Jarr Family

Mr. Jarr Doesn't Know Yet Whether He Is Promoted or Out of a Job.

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By Roy L. McCardell.

MRS. JARR went to the telephone and called up Clara Mudridge. Miss Mudridge's maid answered with the information that Miss Mudridge wasn't up yet.

"You tell her it's Mrs. Jarr, and put on her kimono, and come down to the telephone," said Mrs. Jarr, with some asperity.

After a long wait, the maid returned to the Mudridge end of the telephone and informed Mrs. Jarr that Miss Mudridge said that she wasn't up yet, wouldn't arise for some time, and suggested that Mrs. Jarr call up several hours later.

"The mix!" cried Mrs. Jarr, as she hung up the telephone receiver. "After all I did for that girl, too! Time was that she'd be on that telephone day and night pestering the life out of me, when she wasn't hanging around this house begging me to help her catnap poor Mr. Silver. Now she's lost him and he's gone. Further than that, she takes my husband out to the theatre and takes eyes at him! I can see her."

"I might have gone myself! Goodness knows, I get very little enjoyment," continued Mrs. Jarr, putting more fuel to her wrath. "But, no, I sacrifice my own pleasure for others and this is the thanks I get! Fortunately, I can trust my husband! But, really, I made a great mistake in throwing him in the way of a bold girl of that sort!"

Shortly after noon, she put on her hat and went around to see Miss Mudridge, and all the way she thought of stinging things to say.

"Miss Mudridge isn't home," said the grinning maid, who answered Mrs. Jarr's ring at the Mudridge door. "She's gone out."

"Gone out!" echoed Mrs. Jarr. "Why, I called her up this morning and she went over by you that she wouldn't be up for some time."

"She had an engagement, mum. A tent called in an automobile for her about half an hour ago," answered the maid, "and she was already dressed and waiting for him."

"Oh! Mr. Silver is back in the city?" entreated Mrs. Jarr in an inquiring tone.

"It wasn't Mr. Silver. It was a very different party from Mr. Silver," said

the maid mysteriously.

A horrible suspicion pervaded Mrs. Jarr. She forced a smile and said, with forced lightness:

"How stupid of me! I forgot Mr. Jarr was to call for her first in the automobile."

"It wasn't Mr. Jarr, either," replied the maid. "It was the same gentleman that brought her home last night and he gave me a five-dollar tip. Oh, I forgot, I wasn't to say a word."

But Mrs. Jarr, though still curious, felt relieved. It was evident that Mr. Jarr was not implicated in any more automobile scandals. She felt recovered sufficiently to leave a parting sting.

"Tell Miss Mudridge," she said, "that she left that package of letters Mr. Silver wrote her before he left her at our house. And I want to know what she does with them."

And as she walked away she said to herself:

"I know what I'll do with them. I'll keep them and all the foolish notes she wrote ME too! I'll hold something over her head."

She returned home and later on called up Mr. Jarr.

"Do you know where Clara Mudridge is?" asked Mrs. Jarr.

"Yes," said Mr. Jarr. "I do."

"Where is she?" asked Mrs. Jarr breathlessly.

"She's run off and married the boss," replied Mr. Jarr gloomily. "He's just telephoned in from Yonkers that he's married Miss Mudridge and won't be at the office for several days. I guess I'd better go out and look for another job."

"You come home and tell me all about a couple of days off, too," it replied Mrs. Jarr. "And you take a couple of days off, too."

"I'll have plenty of days off. Off the payroll, I mean," replied the doleful man. "He don't like me. He thinks she's the wicked bride."

"Don't talk silly!" replied Mrs. Jarr. "If there's a grateful atom in all Clara Mudridge's body she'll see you get promoted. If there isn't—well, you leave it to ME!"

But it was only at his usual hour that Mr. Jarr took his hat and shut down his desk.

As he came sorrowfully up the street to his home a scolding figure came out from Clara's side door. It was Mr. Jack Silver disguised as a chauffeur.

Mr. Silver stuck his hat under Mr. Jarr's nose, while the tears rolled down his cheeks.

"Robber! Villain!" cried Mr. Silver. "Look at this evening paper! Sensational! Rip-roaring! Through your machinations the only woman I ever loved has married your home in Yonkers!"

"What are Yonkers?" asked Mr. Jarr. "It was an old gag, but it came in pat-

## SAYINGS OF MRS. SOLOMON

By Helen Rowland

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My Daughter, how shalt thou select a husband? For they come in assorted materials and bewildering designs; yet there seemeth but little choice among them.

Now, a damsel came unto me saying: "Behold, I would MARRY. Yet, how shall I choose a MATE? For I know FOUR men; and one is a thing of beauty; and one is a human money bag; and one is a genius; and one is a man of 'character,' unto whom I can LOOK UP. Yet my heart is divided amongst them. Then I answered her, saying:

"Go to, my Daughter! I charge thee wed not an Adonis, lest thou be condemned to serve all the days of thy life as a human PICTURE FRAME, and to dwell forever in fear and trembling."

"Lo, she that cedeeth a Caliban dreadeth not lest OTHER women shall wrout him from her; but she that marryeth a man for his 'fatal fascination,' shall peradventure DIVORCE him for the same reason."

"Nay, if thou desirest a parlor ornament, get thee a poodle dog, which is more stylish and less expensive."

"For a thing of beauty is not ALWAYS a joy forever—around the house."

"Above all, I charge thee, wed not a GENIUS, for of such is the Kingdom of Incompatibility."

## British Humor.

A HEN with two heads has been born in China.

A Wilkesian man has made an aeroplane out of a wheelbarrow for his small son.

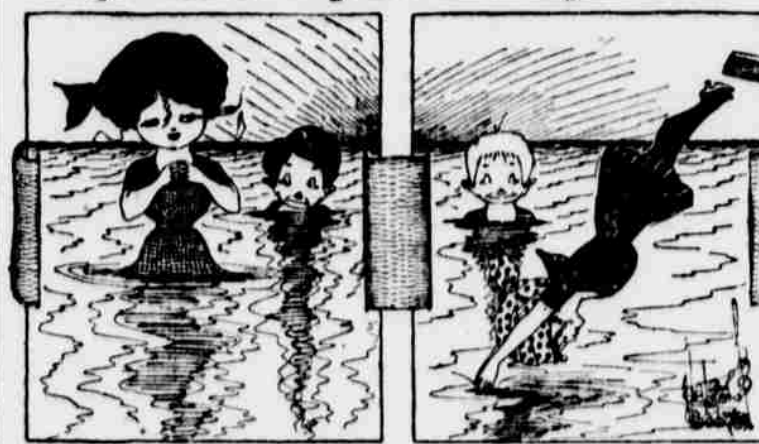
A bootmaker at Loughborough fell from a fourth-floor window on to a friend and was picked up laughing.

Dr. Makow, an eminent Russian scientist, has made a discovery of enormous importance to the medical profession. He will not say what it is.

Walking home with her mother from church, Mary Lamb of Lowestoft delicately collided with a motor-car and was seriously injured. She had been behaving strangely for some time past.

Arrested for assaulting the police, James Macfarlane of Edinburgh, la-borer, no fixed abode, remarked, in reply to the Judge, that he was no relation to the famous poet and did not want to be. The Judge: "Stand down."—London Sketch.

## Splash! Splash! Splash!



"Why do you say my bathing suit is funny?"

"Because 'brevity is the soul of wit.'"

"Johnny Noble wears awfully filthy clothes."

"I wonder if that's why the hotel crowd say he's a shine."

## The Thrush's Nest.

WITHIN a thick and spreading hawthorn bush, that overhung a mole hill large and round, I heard, from morn to morn, a merry thrush sing hymns to sunrise, while I drank the sound.

With joy and often an intruding guest, I watch'd her secret toils from day to day.

How true she warp'd the moss to form her nest, And model'd it within with wool and clay.

And by and by, like heath bells gill with dew, There lay her shining eggs, as bright as flowers.

Ink spotted over shells of green and blue; And there I witness'd, in the summer hours, A brood of Nature's minstrel choir and fly.

Glad as the sunning and the laughing sky.

—JOHN CLARE.

These should be delivered personally in homes of moderate means where there are children of the right ages. Become acquainted with mothers, as they will be more likely to send their children to you than they would if you were a total stranger. If the children like you they will be the means of increasing your business for you. Women who belong to clubs and societies will be interested in your cards, as will also ministers, who would hail an opportunity of aiding their parishioners to find time for church work. Saturdays and Mondays will probably be found to be the best days, as all women who do their own work will appreciate it. If you are married and have children of your own old enough to help it will be of great benefit to your enterprise.

There are hundreds of good ways of entertaining children. You could read stories to the older ones while the smaller ones were building houses with blocks, toothpicks, etc. All children like to string beads. The large and small wooden beads in six different colors cost about 40 cents a gross, and may be string'd fine wire and bent into numerous queer shapes. Paper cutting is another good amusement, which includes

## Hedgeville Editor

By John L. Hobbie

THE man who has no sense of humor thinks there is no sense to humor.

MERELY a man has the appearance of being in deep thought when he is merely unconscious of the fact that he is conscious.

THE young girl nowadays that says she also been kissed in the very one she has; and the one that says she has also had.

GEORGE FORD says it is safer to lead a decent life than to run the chances of some girl deciding to become your wife to reform you.

IT is no trouble to get help in this world. If you are going up or if you are going down there is always somebody willing to give you a push.

A BURNING SIGN.

(From the Washington Star.)

"I feel," said Mr. Grabbingber, "that I am advancing in wealth and influence."

"For what reason?"

"Because around me laugh heartily when I tell stories which formerly failed to get a ripple."

## "Them Was the Happy Days!"

By Clare Victor Diggins

